

# St. Monica's Parish

North Parramatta



*"Our mission is to build up an active parish community with the Eucharist as the centre, foster deeper prayer and spirituality and reach out as a witnessing community"*

**SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT - YEAR A**

**04TH DECEMBER 2022**

## ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

O people of Sion, behold,  
the Lord will come to save the nations,  
and the Lord will make the glory of his voice heard  
in the joy of your heart.

## FIRST READING

**A reading from the prophet Isaiah**

**Is 11 : 1 - 10**

A shoot springs from the stock of Jesse, a scion thrusts from his roots: on him the spirit of the Lord rests, a spirit of wisdom and insight, a spirit of counsel and power, a spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.

(The fear of the Lord is his breath.) He does not judge by appearances, he gives no verdict on hearsay, but judges the wretched with integrity, and with equity gives a verdict for the poor of the land.

His word is a rod that strikes the ruthless, his sentences bring death to the wicked. Integrity is the loincloth round his waist, faithfulness the belt about his hips.

The wolf lives with the lamb, the panther lies down with the kid, calf and lion cub feed together with a little boy to lead them. The cow and the bear make friends, their young lie down together. The lion eats straw like the ox. The infant plays over the cobra's hole; into the viper's lair the young child puts his hand. They do no hurt, no harm, on all my holy mountain, for the country is filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters swell the sea.

That day, the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples. It will be sought out by the nations and its home will be glorious.

*This is the word of the Lord*

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 71**

**Response:** Justice shall flourish in his time,  
and fullness of peace for ever.

1. O God, give your judgement to the king,  
to a king's son your justice,  
that he may judge your people in justice  
and your poor in right judgement. (R.)
2. In his days justice shall flourish  
and peace till the moon fails.  
He shall rule from sea to sea,  
from the Great River to the earth's bounds. (R.)
3. For he shall save the poor when they cry  
and the needy who are helpless.  
He will have pity on the weak  
and save the lives of the poor. (R.)
4. May his name be blessed for ever  
and endure like the sun.  
Every tribe shall be blessed in him,  
all nations bless his name. (R.)

## SECOND READING

**A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans**

**Rom 15 : 4 - 9**

Everything that was written long ago in the scriptures was meant to teach us something about hope from the examples scripture gives of how people who did not give up were helped by God. And may he who helps us when we

refuse to give up, help you all to be tolerant with each other, following the example of Christ Jesus, so that united in mind and voice you may give glory to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It can only be to God's glory, then, for you to treat each other in the same friendly way as Christ treated you. The reason Christ became the servant of circumcised Jews was not only so that God could faithfully carry out the promises made to the patriarchs, it was also to get the pagans to give glory to God for his mercy, as scripture says in one place: For this I shall praise you among the pagans and sing your name.

*This is the word of the Lord*



## GOSPEL

### ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Prepare the way of the Lord,  
make straight his paths:  
all people shall see the  
salvation of God.  
Alleluia!

## GOSPEL

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to St Matthew**

**Mt 3 : 1 - 12**

In due course John the Baptist appeared; he preached in the wilderness of Judaea and this was his message: 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.' This was the man the prophet Isaiah spoke of when he said:

A voice cries in the wilderness:

Prepare a way for the Lord,  
make his paths straight.

This man John wore a garment made of camel-hair with a leather belt round his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem and all Judaea and the whole Jordan district made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins. But when he saw a number of Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism he said to them, 'Brood of vipers, who warned you to fly from the retribution that is coming? But if you are repentant, produce the appropriate fruit, and do not presume to tell yourselves, "We have Abraham for our father," because, I tell you, God can raise children for Abraham from these stones. Even now the axe is laid to the roots of the trees, so that any tree which fails to produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown on the fire. I baptise you in water for repentance, but the one who follows me is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to carry his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fan is in his hand; he will clear his threshing-floor and gather his wheat into the barn; but the chaff he will burn in a fire that will never go out.'

*This is the Gospel of the Lord.*

## COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Jerusalem, arise and stand upon the heights,  
and behold the joy which comes to you from God.

# St. Monica's Catholic Parish

**Cnr Church Street and North Rocks Road, North Parramatta**

<b>SUNDAY MASSES:</b>	Saturday Vigil - 5pm; Sunday - 9am, 11.30am (Cantonese/Chinese Mass) and 6pm
<b>WEEKDAY MASSES:</b>	Tuesday-Friday - 9.15am
<b>EXPOSITION:</b>	Every Thursday 8pm—9pm Every Friday following 9.15am Mass until 10.45am,
<b>RECONCILIATION:</b>	Friday 10-10.30am, Saturday 4-4.40pm, 3rd Sunday of the month 10:15-11am, or on request
<b>MARRIAGES:</b>	Please contact the Parish Priest at least 12 months prior
<b>BAPTISMS:</b>	Please contact the Parish Office for appointment with the Parish Priest. Phone: 9630-1951
<b>ANOINTING OF THE SICK/ EUCHARIST AT HOME</b>	Please contact the Parish Office or Fr Ephraim Lam Phone: 9630-1951
<b>PARISH PRIEST/ CHINESE CHAPLAIN:</b>	Fr. Ephraim Lam Phone: 9630 -1951 Email: shingmanlam@gmail.com
<b>POSTAL ADDRESS:</b>	8 Daking Street, North Parramatta, 2151 Website: <a href="http://www.stmonicanp.org.au">http://www.stmonicanp.org.au</a>
<b>OFFICE HOURS:</b>	Tuesday-Friday 8.30am-2.30pm Phone: 9630-1951 Fax: 9630-8738 Email: stmonicanp@bigpond.com

*St. Monica's School*

School Principal: Lisa Crampton

Phone: 8832 4100

Fax: 8832-4199

Email: stmonicasnparra@parra.catholic.edu.au

## COMMENTARY

### Inaugurating a New Humanity

John proclaimed that the reign of God was 'at hand' as he immersed and plunged followers into the waters of the Jordan River. (His nickname was John the Immerser, or 'baptiser' in the Greek.) He used flowing water to symbolise the washing away of the past for those who repented so that they could be totally focused on the 'at hand' person who would inaugurate God's kingdom.

In this passage, John does not identify the 'Someone'! But he realised that this 'Someone' would have divine power to affect the future by immersing, baptising, his followers with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

At this stage of Advent, we should be like John's disciples, filled with a sense of anticipation, looking forward to the *coming towards us* ('Advent' in Latin) of the One who can flood our minds and bodies with the Holy Spirit and can immerse our hearts in Divine Fire.

We could pause for a moment to thank God that, even though we are unworthy to carry His sandals, there is One who is coming towards us wanting to transform us with Divine Power.

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A prayer of **Peace**  
for the Second week of  
Advent

Heavenly Father,  
Lord of all,  
come and fill this world with your peace.  
May there be an end to hatred  
and division among your people.  
Cease all fighting and war in this world.  
Heal the bitterness and hurt  
in my own heart.  
In this season of Advent,  
prepare my heart for the coming of Jesus,  
our Wonderful Counselor,  
Mighty God, everlasting Father,  
Prince of Peace.  
Fill my heart with your peace  
which passes all understanding.  
For of the greatness  
of his government and peace,  
there shall be no end.  
Amen

Source: Prayer + Possibilities with Kathryn Shirey

## FEAST DAYS & COMMEMORATIONS

December 8, THE IMMACULATE  
CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED  
VIRGIN MARY

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO PRAY  
FOR THOSE OF OUR PARISH  
FAMILY WHO ARE SICK.  
ESPECIALLY**

Paul Chiu, John Rodrigues,  
Dave & Fan Lin Wilson,  
Francis Lee, Jerry A, Michelle  
Barnes, Levi Bell, Grace  
Boitano, Gesualda Borg,  
Monica Teresa & Fernanda  
Carigliano, Veronica Coorey.  
Margaret Dorahy, Heidi  
Ellich, Josie Estera, Philippe  
Kalife, Tim Kelly, Mary  
Korunic, Lillian Leigh,  
Monique Malouf, Maria  
Itang Tagle, Sheila Watts,  
Tina de Larrazabal, Rosa  
Santos, Llave Family,  
Gloria Cherote

## MASS INTENTIONS

*Please refer to the notice  
board at the entrance..*

## PARISH ACTIVITIES



### Silent Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Every Thursday from 8pm–9pm.  
Every Friday following 9.15am Mass until 10.45am.  
All are welcome.



**St Monica's Parish Rosary Group** Last Meeting for this year will be on the 14th December. Resuming on 1st February 2023. Enquiries : Lynn McBride : 0423 696 961



**Christian Meditation** every Thursday from 6.30pm to 7.30pm. Participation via zoom is available. Enquiries/facilitator: Patricia Brown : 0418 406 661 or email: pabrown02@gmail.com



**Catholic Women's League St Monica's Branch** Last meeting for the year is 28th November. First meeting next year is 27/02/2023. Enquiries : Julie Skulander on 0411 988 361



**St Monica's Piety Stall** (open alternate weeks)  
Stall is open on Saturday 4.40 - 6.15pm  
Sunday 8.40 - 10.15am  
Contact : Julie Skulander on 0411 988 361



**St Monica's Art Group**  
Final workshop for 2022 is 3rd December.  
Workshops resume on the 4th of February 2023.  
Contact : Vera (WhatsApp 0402936947).

### Write the WORD 2022-2024

To anticipate the celebration of the 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this parish, everyone is invited to join in "Write the WORD" to increase our familiarity of the Holy Scripture. For details you can take a leaflet at the main entrances of the church, or call the Parish Office (9630 1951), or send an email to [write.the.word.2024@gmail.com](mailto:write.the.word.2024@gmail.com)



**SVDP CHRISTMAS APPEAL** Our Christmas Appeal once again seeks the generosity of our Parishioners whose donations ensure that the less fortunate of our Community enjoy in the Celebration of our Saviour's Birth.

Envelopes are on pews and may be placed in the 2<sup>nd</sup> collection box.

Commencing weekend 3rd/4<sup>th</sup> December - 17th/18<sup>th</sup> December, Christmas Tree will be at back of the Church to accommodate Parishioners traditional gift giving of Christmas Hamper goodies e.g. Christmas mini puddings/cake/lollies, tin hams as well as staple food items and in conjunction with the School Community, hamper collections will be combined, collated and distributed during Christmas Week. Our Family gift tree will also be available at back of Church, please take card and return with gifts.

As always, your ongoing and traditional hamper/gift giving is greatly appreciated and many would forgo Christmas as most of us know, without your selfless action/caring.



### Bishop's Christmas Appeal

Thank you for your donations.  
As a Parish we collected \$ 790 Last weekend.



### Christmas Concert (with light dinner)

Date : 10<sup>th</sup> December 2022 (Sat)  
Venue : Hall  
Dinner : 6:30pm. Light dinner will be served by our Youth Group. Tickets \$15 (all gains will support them to go to WYD 2023). Concert: 7:30pm. Different singing groups (including Fr Ephraim) will perform various kinds of Christmas songs. Dinner tickets are available at all Masses this weekend - 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> December. Enquiries: Rebecca Cheung 0449 055 395



### Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception

Mass time :

7<sup>th</sup> December 2022 (Wed), 7:30pm Chinese Mass (Vigil)

8<sup>th</sup> December 2022 (Thur), 9:15am, 7:15pm, English Mass

Flyers of the Christmas Mass timetable are available at the main entrance of the church.

## 10th/11th December ROSTERS

	5pm Vigil	9am	6pm
<b>Readers</b>	J. Whippy M. Whippy	C. Cheung S. Joseph	M. Ellis O. Holsinger
<b>Extraordinary Ministers</b>	M. Woolridge A. Hernandez	J. Cruz B. Hooker	
<b>Acolytes</b>	Peter Handcock	Nishan Joseph	Adrian Cheung
<b>Cleaning</b>	Group 2 - Vera		
<b>Morning Tea</b>	Regina Astorga & Sanchia Pinto		
<b>Counting</b>	Group 4 - Peter Mooney & Michael Falamich		



## Christmas in Other Countries

Have you ever wondered how other countries celebrate Christmas, and what special Christmas customs and traditions other cultures may have? Here in Australia, Christmas might look something like presents under trees decorated with lights and baubles, Christmas lunch or dinner with friends and family and for us here, going to mass. But how does the rest of the world do it?



In Poland, Christmas Eve dinner starts with the sharing of the *Oplatek*. The *Oplatek* is a thin, unleavened wafer stamped with the image of the Nativity on it. Everyone breaks off a piece and exchanges greetings and good wishes before passing it along.



Over in Greece, the festive season of Christmas is celebrated not only with decorated Christmas trees but also decorated Christmas boats (known as 'karavaki') as well. Greek people feel a particular connection with the sea, and the *karavaki* symbolize the sailing towards a new life as represented by the

birth of Jesus Christ. Some people also believe that the boats are a way to thank Saint Nicholas, patron saint of sailors, for his protection. Small wooden *karavaki* are placed near doors or fireplaces and often hold not just decorative ornaments but also sweets and candy.

Christmas in Mexico features piñatas which are a staple for their Christmas festivities. The traditional Christmas piñata is a brightly coloured seven-pointed star, with each point representing one of the seven deadly sins. The person who will hit the piñata wears a blindfold to symbolize blind faith, and using the stick, a person whacks the piñata to represent the vanquishing of sin. When the piñata is pierced, the treats inside fall like a showering of God's blessings and forgiveness.



Then there are some other countries like Japan for example where Christmas is not a national holiday nor religious observance for the majority of the population but the people have found their own way to celebrate it. Following a 1974 marketing campaign by KFC called "Kurisumasu ni wa kentakkii!" or "Kentucky for Christmas!" families, friends and couples would share a KFC meal. This is so popular that people can order their KFC box in advance starting from early November. According to KFC, the Kentucky Christmas dinner packages account for about a third of the chain's yearly sales in Japan!

It is wonderful that Jesus's birthday is synonymous with such a happy occasion for all. For us Christians in particular we rejoice because we remember that God so loved the world that he gave the gift of His only Son to enter into this world and bring us the Good News that he desires all men and women to be saved from sin and death. In whichever way we celebrate it, the Christmas season is a time of joy, a time of gathering of loved ones, of well-wishing and festivities.

- Abby

## Youth Announcements



### St Monica's Youth Group (FYRE)

Youth group continues for another month in the community room, starting at 10:30AM! Feel free to drop by for some games and friendly chats 😊 This month we will be starting a new topic- Social justice and relativism with Rebecca and Rachel!

### Christmas Party

We will be having a Christmas Party on the 19th December (Monday) at 6:30PM in the hall to celebrate the end of another year 😊 All are welcome!